

From: david randall
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 8:48pm
Subject: microsoft settlement

i'm writing to express my deep concern over the proposed microsoft settlement. i firmly believe that in its existing form, this settlement isn't a penalty, it's a total gift. they get indemnity against further prosecution and all it takes is the donation of a few used PC's and a gift of software which costs them next to nothing. microsoft itself couldn't fabricate a better scenario.

if any other company controlled 95% of a global resource, there would be worldwide outcry. microsoft has been shown to have used illegal leverage to push windows into its current position of dominance. only a far-reaching and significant penalty can start to open up the markets which microsoft has spent millions to systematically close down.

for what it's worth, i believe the best course of action is a substantial monetary penalty (far in excess of \$1 billion) which must be paid directly to schools for the enhancement of their computer education programs. microsoft should not be allowed to offer any unusual discounts to encourage windows adoption. instead, schools should be free to purchase whatever hardware and software they deem appropriate. furthermore, i believe a non-partisan oversight committee should be created as a watchdog with court approved authority to investigate and remedy any actions which it deems are anticompetitive for a period not to exceed 5 years.

the sherman anti-trust laws were designed to protect consumers from exactly the kind of predatory tactics that microsoft has demonstrated over the last few years. already, microsoft has been elevated to the status of a global utility with almost total control of all informational flow across the planet. only a dramatic and well-conceived remedy can help to undo the damage.

microsoft should not be rewarded for anti-competitive behavior. they have been proven guilty and they must feel the full weight of the law.

thank you for listening,

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